

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, ENRG, GB

SUBJ: BUSINESS TRAVEL: VISIT OF G'BAKPOMA, ARNOLD, DICKSON

REF: STATE 21917

1. GROUP COMPOSED OF THREE AMERICANS AND THREE AFRICANS MET WITH AMBASSADOR FEBRUARY 6 TO DISCUSS AIM OF THEIR BUSINESS TRIP TO GABON. EMBASSY OFFERED NORMAL ASSISTANCE.

2. GROUP MET WITH MINISTER OF MINES, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF MIN PUBLIC WORKS AND TRANSPORTATION, REPRESENTATIVE OF PRESIDENCY AND PRESIDENT OF ELF-GABON IN PORT-GENTIL.

3. RYDER SYSTEM INC. WHO IS SPONSORING ARNOLD AS BROKER OFFERED ASSISTANCE TO GABON (IN RETURN FOR CRUDE OIL) IN FOLLOWING AREAS: (A) DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL SHIPPING COMPANY; (B) TIMBER; (C) NATIONAL ROAD SYSTEM; AND (D) CIVIL AVIATION. ARNOLD WAS TOLD NO OIL IS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE FOR LONG-TERM SUPPLY CONTRACT.

4. MINISTER OF MINES GAVE ARNOLD WRITTEN PROPOSAL FOR A NATIONAL SHIPPING COMPANY FOR RYDER CONSIDERATION. MIN MINES ALSO PROMISED HAVE DEFINITE SIGNED PROPOSALS FOR ARNOLD AND RYDER READY BY "END OF NEXT WEEK" ON FOREST, HIGHWAY AND CIVIL AVIATION SECTORS. PROPOSALS TO BE PREPARED BY THE APPROPRIATE MINISTRY. ARNOLD PROMISED TO CONTACT MINMINES BY FEBRUARY 22.

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5. ARNOLD LEFT GABON FEBRUARY 15 CONFIDENT ULTIMATELY

SOME DEALS WILL BE MADE AND THAT IN SPITE NO OIL FOR SALE
RYDER STILL INTERESTED. ARNOLD PLANS TO RETURN TO GABON
FOR FURTHER DISCUSSIONS. HE STATED HE DOES NOT PLAN TO
USE G'BAKPOMA FOR ANY VENTURES WITH GOG. ARNOLD REPORTED
THAT MISSION WAS WARMLY WELCOMED BY GOG AND THAT GOG READY
TO DO BUSINESS WITH REPUTABLE AMERICAN FIRMS IN A NUMBER
OF AREAS.

6. COMMENT: EMBASSY FOUND THE MISSION REMARKABLY DIS-
ORGANIZED. UNTIL LAST DAY MISSION DID NOT USE INTERPRETER,
RELYING UPON TOTALLY INDADEQUATE ENGLISH OF G'BAKPOMA. IN SPITE
OF THIS LANGUAGE BARRIER IT IS APPARENT THAT GOG READY
TO WORK WITH AMERICAN ENTERPRISES IN JOINT VENTURE BASIS.
EMBASSY LESS OPTIMISTIC THAN ARNOLD ABOUT EASE OF
DEVELOPING BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES IN AREAS DISCUSSED.
OBVIOUSLY DEVELOPMENTS IN THESE AREAS ONLY IN VERY
PRELIMINARY STAGES AND EMBASSY WILL REPORT AS PROPOSALS
UNFOLD MORE COMPLETELY.
COUNTRYMAN

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